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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BRUSSELS 004629

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/FO - TEFFT, EUR/RUS, EUR/UMB, EUR/ERA  
MOSCOW FOR EUR A/S JONES AND EUR/RUS DIRECTOR WARLICK

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/27/2009

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [ETTC](#) [RS](#) [XH](#) [EUN](#) [USEU](#) [BRUSSELS](#)

SUBJECT: EU-CIS RELATIONS: GROWING FRUSTRATION WITH MOSCOW

Classified By: USEU POLOFF LEE LITZENBERGER; REASONS 1.4 (B,D)

11. (C) SUMMARY: During October 22 U.S.-EU Troika meeting on Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova, EU officials told EUR DAS Tefft that diminishing expectations for the EU-Russia summit and disappointment over elections in Belarus were leading the EU to reconsider its policies toward both countries. In particular, Russian skepticism of the European Neighborhood Policy and EU influence in Russia's 'near abroad' is likely to lead to EU-Russian friction in the future. On Ukraine, the EU explained its new Neighborhood Policy as primarily an attempt to bring Ukraine closer to the West but noted that "if, at the start, the Presidential elections are stolen" it would be difficult going. The Troika also discussed next steps on Moldova, with the EU unexpectedly noting that it had begun sharing the US-EU Stability Declaration text with Moldova, Russia and Romania. END SUMMARY.

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FOUR SPACES: RUSSIA'S DELAYS PROMPT REEVALUATION?  
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12. (C) Jan Lucas van Hoorn, Dutch MFA Director for Southeast and Eastern Europe, and Michael Leigh, Commission Deputy Director General, both told EUR DAS Tefft that they were hopeful that the EU and Russia would agree on "roadmaps" for further action in each of the four common spaces prior to the November 11 EU-Russia summit. (The four spaces are Internal Security, External Security, Economics and Trade, and Culture and Research.) Van Hoorn said that although the EU would prefer agreement on roadmaps for all four spaces as a package for the November 11 summit, the EU would settle for "practical implementation" of whatever elements are agreed by the summit.

13. (C) Leigh and Van Hoorn noted that the EU and Russia have essentially agreed to the roadmaps on the economic and cultural spaces. In particular, the EU is pleased with Russia's Kyoto ratification, and with Russian agreement to include environmental issues -- such as use of double-hulled tankers -- and trade-related issues, such as fees for Siberian overflights, in the economic roadmap. But this success contrasts sharply with discussions on the external and internal security roadmaps, which remain "problematic." In the internal security roadmap, Russia continues to object to discussion of Chechnya or human rights, lobbies for Russian minority rights in the Baltic states, and harbors unrealistic hopes the EU will grant visa free travel to Russian citizens. In the external security roadmap, Van Hoorn said that Russia is "not ready" to discuss with the EU issues related to the 'near abroad'. In a separate meeting, Council Secretariat official Carl Hallergard said that at the October 19 EU-Russia ministerial, FM Lavrov had likened EU enlargement to CIS integration, saying, "We each have our neighborhoods. If we need help in ours, we'll let you know." Kees van Rij, Head of Task Force in the Council Secretariat, noted that Russia's "zero-sum approach" to its near abroad precludes serious engagement with the EU on their shared neighborhood.

14. (C) In contrast, van Rij noted Russian receptivity on non-proliferation and anti-terrorism cooperation, and EU counter-terrorism Czar de Vries will travel to Moscow in early November. But substantive cooperation remains elusive, and van Rij was puzzled by the Russian enthusiasm to create common structures to deal with security issues and its simultaneous reluctance to engage on the issues such structures would have to address.

15. (C) EU officials were pessimistic regarding Russia's steps to weaken democracy and failure to resolve frozen conflicts. The Commission said the surveillance and pressure on foreign companies and signs of weakening democracy are part of a "consolidation of a trend that has been taking place all along since 2001". Leigh said "managed democracy" may be the best that can be hoped for; the media grab and other measures taken by Putin to increase control "gives the EU pause" to think about the EU's underlying assumption that engagement with Russia can be based on a slow convergence of values between Russia and Europe. That isn't happening. With the new Commission coming in, and given post-Beslan developments

in Russia, Leigh said the EU may reevaluate its approach to Russia.

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MOLDOVA: STABILITY DECLARATION, SANCTIONS AND EU PEACEKEEPING  
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16. (C) Van Hoorn informed DAS Tefft that the EU had begun sharing the US-EU draft Stability Declaration with Moldova, Russia and Romania. At the October 19 EU-Russia ministerial, Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov dismissed the text as "a good OSCE document". Van Rij said the EU had told these countries that the Text of the declaration is "not carved in stone" and remains "open to discussion". The EU plans to solicit reactions from all concerned, and look for an opportunity to use the text to kick-off pentagonal talks, which the EU would host. DAS Tefft said the U.S. would make parallel approaches in Moldova, Russia, Ukraine, Romania, and the OSCE to share the text. Van Hoorn and Tefft discussed jointly visiting Chisinau the week of November 15 to discuss next steps.

17. C) DAS Tefft informed the EU that the US was considering taking action against the Transnistrian banking sector, and asked the EU to consider doing the same. Raul de Luzenberg, Moldova Desk Officer at the Commission, said that the Commission is "looking into" the possibility of financial sanctions, but faces legal and other challenges in collecting adequate information on which to take action.

18. (C) DAS Tefft asked about the possibility of an EU Peacekeeping Mission in Moldova, should the Russian troops leave Moldova as part of a political settlement. Van Rij said that the EU had had internal discussions on this in September 2003, but it had suspended its planning to focus on reaching a political settlement first. Nonetheless, the EU said the plans could be "dusted off" if a political settlement became likely. Van Hoorn agreed to share EU documents on post-settlement plans with the U.S.

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UKRAINE'S ELECTIONS AND MIXED COOPERATION WITH MOLDOVA  
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19. (C) During October 21 meetings with the EU, Moldovan FM Stratan had taken a "stronger anti-Ukrainian position than before", and said he expected a negative "break" in Moldova-Ukrainian relations. De Luzenberg said a recent meeting between Ukrainian and Moldovan officials on border issues had been tense, but progress had been made on demarcation and exchange of information between Moldova and Ukraine.

110. (C) Leigh noted that the EU's Neighborhood Policy was initially conceived to encourage Ukraine to move closer to the West. Ukraine did not like the Neighborhood Policy, preferring instead an offer on eventual membership, but had reluctantly agreed to negotiate a Neighborhood "Action Plan." Now, however, if at the start of the plan Ukraine's presidential elections are "stolen," Leigh said, EU relations with Ukraine will be difficult. EU officials were very interested in coordinating with the US on a possible travel ban on officials involved in undermining free and fair elections in Ukraine.

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EU HARDENING STANCE ON BELARUS?  
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111. (C) Nadine Ernzer, Regional Director for CIS Countries in the Political Department from Luxembourg, said that the October 17 elections had had been far worse than expected and, combined with Lukashenko's consolidated grip on power, showed similarities to a "fascist regime". The EU is now considering "possible measures" to respond to developments in Belarus, and Nadine said the EU would "reappraise its Belarus policy".

112. (C) DAS Tefft summarized recent U.S. actions, including the Belarus Democracy Act, the possible expansion of the visa ban to penalize election defrauders, and a desire to increase training of political opposition and civil society, and student exchanges. Ernzer said that the EU would consider similar actions to be implemented in early 2005.

113. (C) Weidemann said that EU policy on Belarus was based on the assumption of an eventual change of leadership. With Lukashenko increasing his chances to be president-for-life with the referendum, van Rij said the EU would have to go beyond funding civil society and look for alternative responses in "a fresh manner". Tefft said that developing a joint list of possible actions would be useful, and that encouraging positive engagement from the Russians would be crucial.

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COMMENT

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14. (C) Recent changes in Russia and the absence of transparent and fair elections in Belarus -- and likely in Ukraine -- are prompting an internal reassessment of EU policy toward Russia and the CIS. Although the EU will continue to engage Russia and the CIS to promote democracy and political pluralism, continued negative trends in the region may lead the EU increasingly to link its engagement with more punitive measures such as financial sanctions and visa bans. END COMMENT.

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Participants  
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15. (U) EU Delegation

Netherlands (current EU Presidency):

Jan Lucas van Hoorn, Director in Dutch MFA for Southeast and Eastern Europe  
Anthony van der Togt Head of Division in Dutch MFA for Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Luxembourg (successor to Netherlands in EU Presidency):

Nadine Ernzer, Regional Director for CIS Countries, Political Department  
Judith Feider, Permanent Representation of Luxembourg to the EU

European Commission

Taneli Lahti, Desk Officer, Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, DG Relex  
Karsten Mechlenburg, Desk Officer, Ukraine, DG Relex  
Reinhold Brenden, Desk Officer, Moldova, DG Relex

EU Council Secretariat

Sofia Moreira de Sousa, Administrator, Ukraine and Central Asia Desk, DGE  
Annika Weidemann, Administrator, Belarus and Moldova Desk, DGE  
Karl Hallergard, Administrator, Russia Desk, DGE  
Kees van Rij, Head of Task Force Europe/Central Asia and Transatlantic Relations

U.S. Delegation

John Tefft, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs  
Lee Litzenberger, Political Officer, US Mission to the EU  
Tom Lersten, Desk Officer, EUR/ERA  
Elzbieta Mazur, Political Officer/TDY US Mission to the EU  
Sean Kimball, Intern US Mission to the EU

16. (U) DAS Tefft has cleared this message.

SCHNABEL